

two of you. You start to get nervous when someone else gets involved in the debate. They may be trying to help you or your opponent. You do not know what they are doing. Sometimes they do not know what they are doing. I understand where she is coming from.

This is not an exclusive club we are talking about. There should be no walls built up in the political arena to keep people out. This is America. This is the United States. We do have a first amendment.

One of the basic beliefs of our founders was that public discussion of issues is essential to democracy. They did not have TV in those days, obviously. They did not have radio. The main method of communication was the printed press, posters being put up, or speeches directly given and directly heard, but the principle is the same. The more people you can involve in political discussion, the better it is.

There can be no walls built around the political arena where we say no one else can enter except the candidates. No one can participate except the candidates. No one can talk about issues in relationship to candidates, except the candidates.

That is just not what we do in the United States. That is not what this country is about. That is not how our political debates should take place. In essence, in a very revealing comment, my friend and my colleague from Maine certainly implied that. That is part of the problem with the way this bill is currently crafted.

This is the United States. I know many times when our campaigns drag on and on and they get pretty messy, and they get pretty rough, a lot of people say: Gee, why don't we do it the way this country does or that country, such and such a country. They do not mess around. They call an election in 6 weeks. They were strict when you could be on TV. They have their election, and it is over. Much as we might long for that sometimes when our campaigns drag on, or when Presidential campaigns start basically a couple months after one Presidential election is over and Senate races start several years in advance and House races seem to never stop, much as we long for that tranquility and the order, if we really thought about it, I do not think we would really want it.

As long as the Wellstone amendment stays in the bill, clearly this bill is going to be held to be unconstitutional.

What is different about us and other countries is our first amendment. It is our first amendment that is at issue. Many countries do not have the equivalent of our first amendment that protects political speech, that protects free speech. We do and we are much better for it. Our political discussion is much better for it and it is more informed.

We are different. I hope when Members of the Senate think about this to-

night and prepare to vote tomorrow, they will remember the importance of the first amendment. They will vote for the DeWine amendment. They will vote to make this a better bill. They will vote to give this bill a much better chance of being held to be constitutional.

It is not just a question of the Constitution; it is also a question of public policy. Putting aside the constitutional issue, I do not think we want to be in a position where this Congress says, basically as the thought police in this country, political speech police, that within 60 days of the election we are going to dramatically restrict who can speak in the only way that is effective in many States, and that is to be on TV. I do not think we want to do that, Mr. President.

I thank my colleagues, and I thank the Chair.

CAMPAIGN TAX CREDIT

Mr. WARNER. Mr. President, as chairman of the Rules Committee during the 105th Congress, I presided over numerous hearings on campaign finance reform and I filed two comprehensive bills on this subject. And, just like my colleagues over the years in the course of my four Senate races, I have gained a firsthand familiarity with campaign finance issues. The Senate can take pride in this debate, while issues regarding the first amendment have been center stage, it seems to me there is another fundamental issue we should consider.

One of our aims during this great debate should be to encourage greater citizen participation in elections. Citizens are the backbone of our democracy and should be given encouragement to participate in every way in the elective process.

What are the means by which we can encourage a greater role for the average citizen? I believe one method is a \$100 tax credit for contributions made to House and Senate candidates. I propose this tax credit be available only to single persons with an adjusted gross income at or below \$50,000. For married couples, in order to avoid exacting a "marriage penalty," a married couple filing jointly could claim a total of \$200 in tax credits.

For various reasons, the wealthy are already involved in politics, but there has been a declining interest in campaigns for those at the other end of the spectrum. This credit would encourage broader participation by moderate and lower income voters to balance the greater ability of special interests to participate in the process.

There is precedent for such a tax credit. Until 1986, there was a \$50 tax credit for contributions to political campaigns. According to IRS data, when Congress repealed the political contributions tax credit, "a significant

percentage of persons claiming the credit have sufficiently high incomes to make contributions in after tax dollars, without the benefit of the tax credit."

My proposal would contrast with the previous tax credit because it would cap the eligible income levels to ensure it is not exclusively the wealthy who take advantage of it.

I think this is an issue that should be addressed in this campaign finance bill. However, because of the constitutional prerogatives of the House of Representatives, I merely bring this issue to your attention now, with the expectation I will raise it again in the context of a reconciliation bill that may be forthcoming.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, during yesterday's campaign finance debate, I referred to a number of businesses that support a campaign finance reform proposal. I meant to say that top executives or chief executive officers of those businesses support the reform proposal.

OIL EXPLORATION IN THE ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

Mr. STEVENS. Mr. President, my colleague from Alaska, Senator MURKOWSKI, and I just attended a press conference concerning exploration in the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

In attendance were: James P. Hoffa, International Brotherhood of Teamsters; Michael Sacco, Maritime Trade Department, AFL-CIO; Terry O'Sullivan, Building Trades Department; Martin J. Maddaloni, United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry; Joseph Hunt, International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers; Frank Hanley, International Union of Operating Engineers; Larry O'Toole, Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association; James Henry, Transportation Institute; and Michael McKay, American Maritime Officers Service.

I ask unanimous consent that the statement made by Michael Sacco of the Maritime Trades Department of the AFL-CIO be printed in the RECORD for my colleagues to read. It offers great insight into the reasons why working men and women throughout the country support oil and gas exploration in the coastal plain.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL SACCO, MTD
PRESIDENT

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